

"WORST DISASTER YEAR" FORCES RAISE IN RED CROSS FUND QUOTAS

The American National Red Cross today announced that of necessity it must ask for an additional \$8,000,000 for disaster work above the normal collections to be made by its Chapters in the 1956 Fund Campaign. This decision was reached as a sequel to the "Worst Disaster Year In American History."

First, unusual tornados in the Midwest, next hurricanes on the Atlantic Seaboard followed by devastating floods in the East and finally the unprecedented "Christmas Floods" that struck the West Coast. This unique series of disasters has all but exhausted disaster funds of the Red Cross. Therefore it is necessary, the Red Cross said, to raise the over-all goal of the 1956 Red Cross Fund Campaign by approximately 10 percent.

The appeal was relayed to Chapters and announced here by E. Roland Harriman, Chairman, following an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors. Mr. Harriman said "The Red Cross has no choice -- all the will in the world is of no avail without funds."

The Red Cross Executive Committee acted after receiving a report from Ellsworth Bunker, President, showing that since July 1st, 1955, three major floods, plus some unusually destructive tornadoes in 1955, had cost the Red Cross an all-time record of more than \$27,000,000 with nearly six months of fiscal year to go. This \$27,000,000 was spent on emergency relief and long-range assistance to families and small business people whose total exceeds by four or five times the victims of an average disaster year.

These unusual disasters quickly ate up the normal allowance of \$4,000,000 for disaster relief, completed absorbed \$16,000,000 in special contributions to flood work in the Northeastern States and reduced the organization's \$8,000,000 disaster reserve fund to less than \$1,000,000.

"This means", Mr. Harriman said, "that the Red Cross is faced with the challenge to restore its ability to respond immediately when disaster strikes and thus to meet both the anticipated disasters which 75 years of experience show come with the spring as well as to provide for the demands of the forthcoming fiscal year starting next July 1.

"We now have less than a million dollars to cope with disaster work this spring and summer. Never before have there been such demands for emergency relief and the more costly long-range assistance to stricken families. We regret extremely to ask this additional contribution from the American public but we are confident that everyone will realize the gravity of our task and the responsibility given to us to act as the Public's agent in alleviating what otherwise would be irreparable distress."

Mr. Harriman emphasized the magnitude of the long-range need. He noted that right now "approximately 11,000 families and small businesses are being assisted in the Western States as a result of the unprecedented and devastating 'Christmas Floods' which struck parts of California, Oregon and Nevada."

"All of these factors", he said, "convinced the Executive Committee that the Red Cross has no alternative but to ask for this additional money during the 1956 Campaign for members and funds."

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA

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The foregoing has made necessary an increase in our Area Goal from \$1,398,000 to \$1,523,474 or \$125,474. This is the highest goal for our Area since the Korean War.